

From Colorado to California

A Trip to the Fashion World Landed a CMHS Grad a Spot in the Industry

By MAREN SOHENSEN

Tiffany Bressan has never forgotten her Colorado roots. And this entrepreneur has taken those roots to California, and even internationally.

Bressan was born in The Broadmoor area and went through D-12 schools. "I loved growing up there; it was a beautiful childhood," she said. Her memories of those days are abundant, as she recalled many teachers specifically, even still able to repeat some of their classroom anecdotes, quotes and stories.

Bressan said each of the teachers "really left their mark. They are all instrumental in who I am today, and nurtured the start of my career."

She said that everything from Spanish classes (which has helped her do business internationally) to varsity cheerleading (which taught her encouragement in many circumstances) were challenging, but gave her a solid foundation for the next steps. She graduated from CMHS in 1995. "Colorado really is an amazing state," said Bressan. The quality of the people and the lifestyle is unmatched.

This alma took her knowledge and still-evident adoration for the area to Colorado State University.



Entrepreneurs and business partners Tiffany Bressan and Courtney Noelle

where she met her eventual business partner, Courtney Noelle, in a "History of Fashion" course. Noelle also grew up in the state, though from "the western slope," as she said. Noelle echoed Bressan's praise for Colo., also saying that the two integrate their business principles with snippets of knowledge they garnered at home.

After they graduated with Fashion Design and Merchandising B.A.'s the two partnered up and decided

to move to California with hopes to start their own business. They began their fashion careers working for individual companies, but eventually summoned up the bravery to start their own business, a company entitled Girl Extraordinaire. "We always knew, even in college, that we'd start our own business," said Bressan.

At Girl Extraordinaire, Bressan took on the design and fashion side while Noelle oversaw the marketing

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Detlef Sarbok Has Lived One Interesting and Exciting Life

By DANNY SUMMERS

Detlef Sarbok was born in Nazi Germany in 1942 during the height of World War II.

But he is one of the most patriotic Americans you will ever meet.

"When I go to a ball game and see someone wearing their hat during the National Anthem, I want to knock it off their head," Sarbok said. "I'm a patriot. I served my country. I did my duty. It's not heroic. It's basic principal. I stand by my values."

Sarbok immigrated to the United States from Austria with his mother, Ursula, in 1956. Two years later – as a 17-year-old – he joined the United States Army, where he served for the next 21 years.

During his time in the military, Sarbok – better known as "D" to anyone who has ever met him – served three tours of duty in Vietnam. He played a key role in Operation Newlife, which was a massive undertaking done in two stages. On April 3 and 4, 1975, nearly 112,000

Bressan

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and sales aspects of their company, which makes shirts and accessories for special occasions. They started with bridal accessories- shirts, keepsakes- and eventually spread their market to cover other occasions.

A "big break" for the company came when one of the women on ABC's "The Bachelorette" wore one of their shirts. Since then, celebrities that have worn Girl Extraordinaire clothes include Paula Abdul, Jaime Pressley and Tori Spelling, among others. Their annual net sales now reach over \$1 million and their products and story have been featured in dozens of magazines. Their products are also featured on multiple websites. Their homepage is www.girlxtraordinaire.com.

The team continues to branch out, as they've recently released a book entitled "Sweet Pea the Bumble Bee: Being Extraordinary." Noelle said the book

is full of positive messages, and is intended to make any reader smile, although the book is geared toward younger audiences. Bressan also said the book is a reflection of "our little piece of Colorado. It helps you look where you came from and make sure that's part of who you are."

Because of the success of their business, Girl Extraordinaire has allowed the owners to do charity work, recently shown by their involvement with the Make-a-Wish Foundation. Bressan and Noelle helped a little girl whose dream was to be a runway model. They designed special clothes for the little lady, shot pictures of her for their catalog and gave her \$1000 for medicine.

They also took their entrepreneurial knowledge back to classrooms, giving Bressan and Noelle the opportunity to share their story and, especially, give women the

knowledge that they have bright opportunities, they said. "You have a dream and it can happen; nothing is impossible," said Bressan.

But the two aren't finished; they want to continue spread their success into more books, possibly a cartoon series and a movie.

Noelle said that the two also want to help change perceptions about the fashion industry. "It can be portrayed as very vain, but we really try to encourage other people, focusing on the positive side and inspiring others. It's not just about the clothes."

"Our whole philosophy is giving back," said Bressan. Even though their company has struggled in the recession, Bressan said confidently that she believes it will all turn around. "We've put that negative energy into creating something beautiful."